



United States Senate Budget Committee

JEFF SESSIONS | Ranking Member

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For Immediate Release

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Sessions And Ryan: Obama Administration Ignores Looming Medicare Bankruptcy *Speeches And Op-Eds From White House Won't Save Medicare*

WASHINGTON—The Obama administration continues to overlook its legal obligation to address Medicare's growing fiscal imbalance. Instead of offering constructive solutions to avert a looming crisis, the president's Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, published a new opinion piece containing numerous falsehoods about the Republicans' plan to save Medicare, while simultaneously defending the president's decision to do nothing and let an unelected board manage Medicare's decline. Meanwhile, the president has ignored the call of Senate Budget Committee Ranking Member Jeff Sessions and House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan to respond to multiple funding warnings issued by the Medicare Trustees. Sessions and Ryan today issued the following statement:

“The Medicare Trustees—most of whom are members of the president's own administration—have issued a Medicare funding warning every year President Obama has been in office. These warnings require the president, by law, to submit a legislative proposal to Congress to address Medicare's looming insolvency. Despite this reasonable legal obligation, President Obama has failed to submit a single legislative proposal to Congress in response to the Trustees' repeated warnings. Instead of a detailed Medicare proposal, we get more denial and demagoguery. Instead of presidential leadership, we get a bogus budget followed by a hyper-partisan speech. And instead of putting forward honest, concrete reforms to Medicare, we get only a broad ‘framework’ and insufficient fact sheets that simply do not fit the bill. When asked at a House Budget Committee hearing last week whether the president's April framework

speech constituted a real budget plan, Congressional Budget Office Director Doug Elmendorf testified, ‘We don’t estimate speeches.’

“The president has apparently decided that it is politically expedient to sit on the sidelines of this important debate, passing the buck to a board of 15 unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats empowered to make across-the-board cuts in payments to doctors and other providers that can only reduce seniors’ access to quality care.

“The president has yet to submit a serious budget to Congress, and it has been 789 days since Democrats in the Senate have passed *any* budget at all. The problems facing Medicare demand leaders who will be honest about the solutions required. It is clear that we have a leadership deficit in Washington that is threatening the future of this critical program. It is time for the administration either to put forward a serious plan to save Medicare, or to stop launching false attacks on the only plan that does.”

BACKGROUND:

Joint letter from Ranking Member Sessions and Chairman Ryan requesting action on the Medicare trigger: <http://budget.senate.gov/republican/analysis/2011/2011-06-14SessionsRyanLettertoObama.pdf>

For more on bipartisan opposition to IPAB:

<http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/269429/ipab-repeal-cards-andrew-stiles>

For more information on the House-passed plan to save and strengthen Medicare:

<http://budget.house.gov/fy2012budget/>

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